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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: NORTH KOREA

Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage June 4 on the statements of President Ma Ying-jeou and the opposition DPP in commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Protest; on the results of senior high school entrance exams; on the National Communications Commission (NCC)'s handling of the change of management of the two TV stations owned by the China Times Group. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a column in the centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" commented on United States Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg's current visit to East Asia as part of the United States' efforts to deal with North Korean nuclear problems. The column said that, although the United States wants to keep the framework of the Six-Party Talks as well as impose sanctions on North Korea, it is still very difficult to contain North Korea, because all countries involved have highly divergent national interests. End summary.

"It Is Difficult for the United States to Build a Net to Besiege North Korea"

The "International Lookout" column in the centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 130,000] (6/4):

"... Washington's strategies have become more and more distinct; whether or not the Six-Party Talks are able to resolve problems, it is still necessary to keep them and not dissolve them hastily, even though North Korea has announced it will not return to the Six-Party Talks. As far as Washington is concerned, the North Korean nuclear issue is a security issue not for the United States alone. Instead, the issue involves many countries, so it requires relevant countries to resolve it jointly. However, the United States also understands that, in reality, the United States and North Korea are the key. Since this cannot be made too obvious, it is necessary to keep the framework of the Six-Party Talks. Even if North Korea wants to boycott [the Six-Party Talks], the situation will be one versus five, which will not do much to enhance North Korea's interests.

"The second step is to impose sanctions on North Korea. The purpose of [United States Deputy Secretary of State James] Steinberg's visit to East Asia is not so much for the Six-Party talks but in fact for sanctions. However, sanctions are a complex issue. As a result, the composition of [Steinberg's] delegation is complex as well. It is insufficient to conduct diplomatic negotiations at United Nations Headquarters, because the issue requires relevant countries to have a full understanding of the items [contained] in the sanctions.

"However, it is not easy to establish a 'common strategy' among the five countries [the United States, Japan, South Korea, China and Russia] simply based on concerns mentioned above. It is because [the five countries] have different vital interests that the five have their own calculations. Although on the surface, [the five countries] are equally angry at North Korea's nuclear test, the vital interests affected by [North Korea's nuclear test] are not necessarily the same. The so-called 'common strategy' is simply that everyone agrees [to impose] sanctions, but there is a great divergence in terms of what kinds of sanctions [might be imposed]. Japanese media said the United States wants to build a net to

besiege North Korea. It appears to be that way on the surface.  
However, it is actually a broken net which cannot make North Korea  
yield."

YOUNG